

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/041/2006

02 June 2006

Further Information on UA 132/06 (MDE 24/037/2006, 15 May 2006) – Fear of forcible return and new concern: Torture

**SYRIA**            **Faleh ‘Abdullah al-Mansuri (m), aged 60, President of the Ahwazi Liberation Organisation (ALO), Dutch national**  
**Rasool Mezrea’ (m), ALO member**  
**Taher ‘Ali Mezra’ (m), aged 40**  
**Jamal ‘Abdawi (m)**  
**Musa Suwari (m), aged 32, university student**  
**Ahmad ‘Abd al-Jaber Abiat (m), aged 20, student**  
**Jamal Obeidi (m), aged 34, student and Chair of Ahwazi Student Union in Syria**  
**‘Issa Yassin al-Musawi (m), aged 30, university student**

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Three of the Iranian Arab activists named above have reportedly been released, but the rest are believed to be still detained incommunicado at unknown locations, where they are at risk of torture and of being forcibly returned to Iran. There are unconfirmed reports that two of them have already been returned.

The eight had been arrested in Damascus on 11 May. Ahmad ‘Abd al-Jaber Abiat, Musa Suwari and ‘Issa Yassin al-Musawi were apparently released some time between then and 19 May, but nothing is known of their current whereabouts, where they were held or how they were treated in custody.

According to Iraqi and Iranian state-controlled TV stations, two of the eight detainees have been forcibly returned to Iran since 31 May, but their names have not been made public and this has not been confirmed in Syrian state media. Any of these Iranian Arab men who were forcibly returned to Iran would face persecution and possibly the death penalty.

Iranian Arab refugee Sa’id ‘Awda al-Saki, who was arrested at the same time as the men named above, was reportedly forcibly returned to Iran on 14 May. He is now held incommunicado at an undisclosed place. Amnesty International fears he may be at risk of torture and ill-treatment, and of being sentenced to death.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

At least 11 men from the Arab minority are reportedly under sentence of death and at risk of execution in Iran. They are believed to have been accused of involvement in bomb explosions that took place in June and October 2005 in the city of Ahvaz, Khuzestan province, distributing material against the state, having contact with dissident organizations operating abroad, and endangering state security. Amnesty International recognizes the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty as the ultimate violation of the right to life. Please see *Iran: Death Sentences appeal case – 11 Iranian Arab men facing death sentences*, AI Index MDE 13/051/2006, May 2006, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE130512006?open&of=ENG-IRN>

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Arabic or French or your own language:**

- welcoming reports that Ahmad ‘Abd al-Jaber Abiat, Musa Suwari and ‘Issa Yassin al-Musawi have been released, and asking whether the reports are correct, and whether the men were well treated in custody;
- expressing concern at reports that the Syrian authorities have forcibly returned two Arab activists to Iran, where they would be at risk of torture, ill-treatment or the death penalty, and calling on the authorities to

ensure that the remaining Iranian Arab detainees are not returned to Iran, either directly or via any third country;

- expressing concern that at least five Iranian Arab men are being held incommunicado at an unknown location, where they are at risk of torture, and calling on the authorities to allow them immediate access to lawyers of their own choosing, their families and any medical treatment they may require.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Bashar al-Assad  
President  
Presidential Palace  
Abu Rummaneh  
al-Rashid Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

**Fax: + 963 11 332 3410**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Ministry of Interior  
His Excellency Major General Bassam Abdel Magid  
Minister of Interior  
'Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

**Fax: +963 11 2223428**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Minister of Foreign Affairs  
His Excellency Walid Mu'allim  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
al-Rashid Street  
Damascus  
Syrian Arab Republic

**Fax: + 963 11 3327620**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 July 2006.